

An Interview with

Dorothy Williams

April 9, 1979

Interviewed by

Carolyn Palmer

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY  
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Interviewee: Williams, Dorothy  
Interviewer: Palmer, Carolyn

Title: An interview with Dorothy Williams, April 9, 1979 / interviewed by Carolyn Palmer

Collection Title: Murrah High School Advanced History Class Oral History Project, Politics and Integration

Scope Note: Murrah High School students, with assistance from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, conducted oral history interviews with local citizens about local politics and the Jackson Public Schools integration. The interviews were conducted during the 1978-1979 school year.

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PALMER: ...an interview on the desegregation of Jackson Public Schools. Could you state your entire name, please?

WILLIAMS: My name is Dorothy [Palmer] Williams.

PALMER: Where were you born?

WILLIAMS: Jackson...where was I born?

PALMER: Yes, ma'am.

WILLIAMS: In Hinds County, Clinton, Mississippi

PALMER: Alright. Could you please explain some of the things that you heard and saw during the desegregation of the schools?

WILLIAMS: Well, during the initial desegregation of the schools, students were very upset, because many of them had been to all-black schools [as has been known], and they feared what they might face going to other schools, not being accepted. And I think the same thing is shown...students picked that up from teachers, because we also, felt the same thing. Teachers were being transferred, not because they wanted to, but to meet the criteria set by HEW. And they were just upset. [inaudible] ostracized [inaudible].

PALMER: Did the Blacks and the Whites seem to adapt to each other?

WILLIAMS: It was a very slow process and right now, I'm not too sure we have completely adapted, because we can see issues or see examples where we were just [thrown] to be together.

PALMER: In your opinion, does there seem to be any change today towards the issue of Blacks and Whites going to school together?

WILLIAMS: As I see it right now, it seems to me that we have been more inclined to go back. You hear a lot of talk about neighborhood schools and we feel still, that this may not have been the best situation. I think it has helped some in some instances and in others it has caused our...I really think teaching has deteriorated too, because even Blacks and Whites I don't think are [sincere] because, you know, when you're dissatisfied with anything you can't do your best job I think.

PALMER: This is the interview on the desegregation of the Jackson Public Schools.

**END OF RECORDING**